

## Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /056 W

----- 076397

R 152305Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7464

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 2733

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, XK

SUBJECT: PRIEST SEES REGIONAL PLOT AGAINST CHURCH

1. FATHER MIGAEL CHAVERRY, COSTA RICAN BORN PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR OF MANAGUA ARCHBISHOPRIC, TOLD POLOFF A FEW DAYS AGO THAT CENTRAL AMERICAN CHURCH HIERARCHIES WERE VERY UPSET ABOUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS IN THE REGION. CHAVERRY SAID THAT THE PROBLEM IN HONDURAS WAS MOST SERIOUS EXAMPLE, BUT TORTURE OF PRIEST IN EL SALVADOR, AND HARASSMENT IN GUATEMALA (FURTHER UNSPECIFIED) SEEMED TO BE BUILDING UP TO A PATTERN OF MILITARY LED GOVERNMENTS PERSECUTING SOCIAL-MINDED PRIESTS. HE ALSO DECLARED THAT THE VARIOUS CENTRAL AMERICAN HIERARCHIES WERE SUSPICIOUS THAT THE MORE AGGRESSIVE POLICY HAD BEEN COORDINATED AT THE LAST MEETING OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN DEFENSE COUNCIL (CONDECA) IN MANAGUA LAST MARCH. HE CLAIMED THAT THE FIVE CHURCHES WERE DISCUSSING ISSUING A JOINT STATEMENT CONDEMNING THESE POLICIES AND THE MENTALITY BEHIND THEM.

2. CHAVERRY CRITICIZED MSGR. GABRIEL MONTALVO, PAPAL NUNCIO TO HONDURAS AND NICARAGUA, AS HAVING POOR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE NATIVE CLERGIES AND FOR BEING OVERLY SYMPATHETIC TO RIGHT-WING GOVERNMENTS. CHURCH OFFICIALS IN THE TWO COUNTRIES PREFERRED

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TO COMMUNICATE THEIR SENTIMENTS DIRECTLY TO ROME RATHER THAN

THROUGH THE NUNCIO.

3. CHAVERRY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE STATE-CHURCH SITUATION IN NICARAGUA DID NOT SEEM TO REFLECT THE GENERAL CENTRAL AMERICAN PATTERN. IN FACT, HE REVEALED THE ARCHBISHOP HAD MET WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA FOR 1 1/2 HOURS ON JUNE 25-- THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE DEC 27 LOS ROBLES INCIDENT, AND THE ARCHBISHOP HAD BEEN ENCOURAGED TO BELIEVE THAT THE GON MIGHT ASSIST THE CHURCH, ALBEIT INDIRECTLY, IN THE REBUILDING OF CHURCHES IN MANAGUA.

4. COMMENT: CHAVERRY IS CONSIDERED SOMETHING OF A CONSERVATIVE WITHIN THE MANAGUA CURIA AND HIS COMMENTS PROBABLY REFLECT MUCH MORE INTENSE FEELINGS BY THE HIERARCHY IN GENERAL.  
SHELTON

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PLOTS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 15 JUL 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <05 JUN 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <15 OCT 2003 by KelleyW0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRIEST SEES REGIONAL PLOT AGAINST CHURCH  
**TAGS:** PGOV, PINS, XK, (CHAVERRY, MIGUEL)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006